

The measurements of the specimen were as follows:

Total length	..	247 cm.
Maximum girth	..	99 "
Tail length	..	144 "
Distance from snout to eye	..	38 "
Diameter of the eye	..	4 "
Lower teeth on each side	..	26 Nos.
Upper teeth on each side	..	27 "

The dorsal surface was olive brown and ventral surface whitish yellow. There were six cross-bands on the body. From its size it appeared to be a young animal.

It appears that the specimen might have migrated in the rainy season from River Gandak. Biswas (1970)¹ states that in rainy season the Gharials migrate up to Allahabad in River Ganges.

The fisherman, Dholan Choudhury, who caught the Gharial, stated that he had in 1968, caught 3 specimens from the same spot on the River Ganges.

The specimen was alive in his possession for 5 days.

GANGETIC PLAINS REGIONAL STATION,
ZOOLOGICAL SURVEY OF INDIA,
RAJENDRANAGAR, PATNA-16,
June 25, 1971.

T. VENKATESWARLU
BHOLANATH
D. P. SANYAL

14. COBRA AND MONITOR LIZARD

On the morning of July 2nd I witnessed a fight between a cobra and a monitor lizard. The incident took place on the sloping bank of an overgrown ditch about twenty feet wide in a small piece of wild land at the back of the Safdarjang airfield. While birdwatching in this area I suddenly came across a cobra (a black one) coiled around a stone with a charge of reeds behind it, its head raised about a foot from the ground, its hood about six inches wide with a binocellate mark. About a yard in front of it a three foot long monitor lizard stood facing it. The lizard moved from side to side probably trying to get a opening for attack while the snake followed its movements carefully. As the lizard moved to one side and came forward, the cobra struck but missed, the monitor jumped on its back, but whipping round, the snake struck once more but missed again as the lizard jumped off. They resumed their old positions watching each other

¹BISWAS, S. (1970). A preliminary survey of Gharial in the Kosi River. *Indian Forester* 96 (9): 705-710.

warily. Suddenly the cobra made a break for it and darted up the opposite slope of the ditch and disappeared with the lizard in hot pursuit. I do not know what followed. The whole scene was watched from about fifteen feet and lasted three or four minutes.

DI/43, SATYA MARG,
CHANAKYAPURI,
NEW DELHI-11,
July 4, 1971.

E. BHARATAN

15. STRIKING BEHAVIOUR IN THE COMMON GREEN WHIP SNAKE (*AHAETULLA NASUTUS*)

In a recent contribution in this *Journal* (67:113; 1970) Romulus Whitaker noted the effects of *Ahaetulla nasutus* bite. I have several times been bitten by Thailand specimens of this snake, with symptoms of bleeding, itchiness, and only slight swelling deriving exactly as those described by Mr. Whitaker. Several individuals made feinting lunges, although one struck and bit with such determination that it required my aid to free its teeth from my hand. My own experience also confirms M. Smith's statement (1943, FAUNA OF BRITISH INDIA Reptilia and Amphibia 3) that, 'when handled it has the peculiar habit of watching one's face and suddenly making a dart at it, aiming usually for the eyes.' The snake is called 'Eye Snake' in parts of its range.

Ahaetulla nasutus has from birth a propensity for striking. On 8 June 1962, in Bangkok, I caught a 65 inch long female, which soon gave birth to eleven young, of which two did not survive birth. Each of these was about ten inches long. Immediately after birth the young were very active, striking at each other and at me.

I noted that specimens of the less common *Ahaetulla prasinus* from southern Thailand were, as a rule, more prone to strike than *Ahaetulla nasutus*. The former were remarkable for the rapidity with which they would whip into the 'S'-shaped striking posture, inflate the neck to reveal the black and white interstitial pattern, flicker the tongue, hiss, and rapidly vibrate the tail. I saw several individuals so excited strike at inorganic objects; one, turning and seeing its own tail vibrating, struck at it!

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January 1, 1971.

PAUL S. SODERBERG